



Feature of the Month

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ADDICTION & PTSD

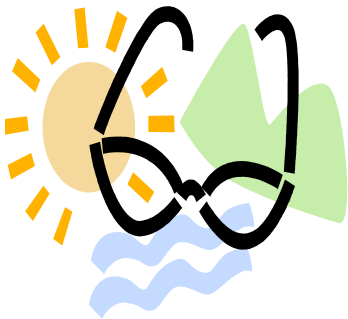
Unexpected life-threatening events can release strong emotions powerful enough to transform our lives and challenge our very sense of self; we can feel bewildered, lost, and unsure of our bearings. Suddenly our way of making sense of the world no longer works. In some cases our core values have been shaken leaving us unsure of who we are or what direction we should take. Trauma (Greek for "wound") is grounded in an event or events that are based in pain, loss and fear. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), is a legitimate medical condition, an anxiety disorder caused by severe psychological stress and the subsequent re-living of the traumatic event through recurrent memories or flashbacks. These "stressors" trigger extreme emotional discomfort in the form of fear, anxiety or distress.

To numb or mask these feelings, self-medication through substance abuse use is a common, if inappropriate, response and those who are survivors of abuse or

trauma are at increased risk of developing a substance use disorder. As well, because stress is a primary trigger for relapse, those suffering with PTSD are particularly vulnerable.

For addiction treatment providers, the accurate diagnosis and effective treatment of co-occurring PTSD and addiction disorder presents a very real challenge. Ultimately, the goal of treatment is to both relieve the symptoms of PTSD and to arrest the addiction. Research indicates that timely control of the psychiatric symptoms of PTSD combined with simultaneous treatment of the addiction offers the best chance for successful recovery from both.

- Stress is one of the most powerful triggers for relapse.
- 10% to 33% of survivors of accident, illness or disaster trauma report problematic alcohol use, particularly if they experience persistent health problems or pain.
- Those with concurrent PTSD and alcohol use problems often have additional mental/physical health problems such as, anxiety and mood disorders.



**HAPPY
VACATIONING**

CONNECTIONS

The challenge in treating clients with substance use disorder is the accurate identification and diagnosis of concurrent mental illness. Based on observed behaviours alone, many individuals with Substance Use Disorder (SUD) are falsely identified as suffering mental illness such as depression or anxiety, which are actually caused by their substance use. Ignorance of an existing substance use disorder may result in a false diagnosis of mental illness. For example, observed symptoms of depression in an alcoholic may be largely alcohol induced rather than evidence of a clinical depression. As well, the observed “mood swings” that could lead to a diagnosis of bipolar disorder can mimic those generated from regular substance use. To further complicate matters, extensive alcohol and drug use may mask an underlying mental illness which remains invisible beneath the active addiction. It is only when the individual becomes clean and sober that the presence of underlying mental illness is evident.

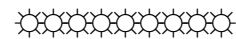
DID YOU KNOW?

According to recent epidemiologic studies, more than 10% of the general population suffers from alcohol use disorders, and 4% to 6% suffer from drug use disorders.

There is a corresponding high rate of comorbidity between Substance Use Disorders and various mental illnesses including: mood disorders, ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), eating, anxiety and personality disorders, learning disabilities, dissociative disorders and various forms of psychosis.

It is believed that over 60% of individuals with bipolar disorder also suffer from substance use disorder. Similar figures are quoted for schizophrenia, and there is, as well, a high association between substance use and mood and anxiety disorders.

The Edgewood News



On June 20th, 2007, the EFAP's Board of Directors hosted a social event at the Royal Canadian Legion to honour Paulyne Charron's 15 years of service on the Board. Paulyne is one of the Founding Board Members of EFAP/North and, although she has resigned from the Board, will continue to be involved with the EFAP committee in her workplace, Community Living West Nipissing.

CONNECTIONS

The Members' Page



WE CARE.
After all, it's our company.



On June 29, 2007 the Columbia Forest Products EFAP Committee held their annual BBQ. Every year, the BBQ is held in celebration of workplace wellness, family and awareness of the EFAP/North Program.

Throughout the day, committee members served Columbia employees hotdogs, hamburgers and pop while chatting and sharing laughs. The spirit of employee wellness and teamwork was truly present. Everyone who participated in the EFAP BBQ deserves a special thank-you for helping to create an enjoyable and wonderful day.

CONNECTIONS

Q & A

Question:

I'm on vacation in three weeks, but I don't know if I can survive until then! Now that the kids are out of school I feel overwhelmed and stressed out! How can I find balance in my life?

Answer:

It isn't easy to juggle the demands of a career and a personal life. Here are some ideas to help you find the balance that's best for you:

Take inventory: What do you do throughout the day? What is important? Cut out unneeded activities or delegate activities if possible.

Communicate clearly: Limit time-consuming misunderstandings by communicating clearly and listening carefully.

Nurture yourself: Set time aside everyday for an activity that you enjoy (walking, reading, working out).

Set aside one night each week for recreation: Turn the phone off, shut-down the computer and turn off the TV. Discover activities that you and your family can enjoy together. Making time for these activities will rejuvenate you.

Get enough sleep: If you are sleep deprived your productivity will go down and you can make costly mistakes (therefore you may have to work longer). Also, your ability to deal with stress will decrease.

Build a support system: Ensuring that you have trusted family members, friends and co-workers will help you find balance in your life. Your support system can assist you through stressful situations.

Seek help: Everyone needs help from time to time. If your life feels too chaotic to manage, contact EFAP/North or another professional.



Book of the Month

THE MAGIC LAMP

Goal Setting for People Who Hate Setting Goals

Author: Keith Ellis

Do you have trouble setting goals? Would you like to have greater focus, stronger follow-through, and achieve dramatically better results? Would you like to learn how to get anything you want from life - more money, a new home, a promotion, better relationships, a greater sense of fulfillment, or anything else you can imagine? If so, read *The Magic Lamp*. This remarkable book describes a simple yet unforgettable process for how to obtain whatever you want from both your personal life and your career.

What's the secret?

The Magic Lamp is the first goal-setting guide for people who hate setting goals. Goals can take you anywhere you want to go, but they rarely give you the inspiration you need to get there. Wishes are different. They have emotional impact. They give you the freedom to dream and the power to make your dreams come true.

The Magic Lamp transforms the process of setting goals from a dull routine into an exciting adventure because it's the first book to combine the methods of goal setting with the magic of making your wishes come true.